(b) if so, whether the EU and India have agreed on a strategic relationship and partnership;

(c) if so, whether action plan is being finalized so that both countries go ahead with the operations; and

(d) if so, to what extent agreement between India and EU has been finalized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the fifth India-EU Summit held in The Hague, the Netherlands on November 08, 2004 launched the Strategic Partnership between India and the EU, in recognition of the growing stature of India as a major regional and global player. The Summit took note of the progress made in strengthening the India-EU relationship since the first Summit in 2000.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, the two sides are presently working together on finalizing an India-EU Joint Action Plan. It is expected to be finalized in time for the 6th India-EU Summit to be held in New Delhi next month.

Torture of Indians abroad

2568. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI C. PERUMAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Indian workers working in Gulf countries, Singapore and Malaysia are tortured brutally and Indian Embassies have failed to take any action;

(b) if so, the details of torture, beheading, whipping mercilessly of Indian workers reported during the last one year;

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter with these countries; and

(d) if so, the response of these countries so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Some cases of maltreatment of Indian

workers have come to the notice of the Government. The country-wise details are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) Indian Missions and Posts abroad have standing instructions to immediately take up such cases with the relevant local authorities/ foreign sponsors with a view to expending the process of law, and obtaining due justice.

Statement

Country-wise details of cases pertaining to maltreatment of Indian workers abroad

Sl. No.	Mission	Details of Torture	Steps taken by the Govt.
1	2	3	4
1.	Riyadh	No case of brutal torture or whipping mercilessly of Indian workers have come to the notice of the Mission. However, as per intimation received from the Saudi authorities, capital punishment has been awarded, during the last one year, to two Indian nationals for drug smuggling and murder respectively, ***after due process of law inaccordance with the Shariat.***	Complaints from the Indian workers are promptly taken up with the Saudi sponsor and, if necessary, with the Saudi Government authorities concerned through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Most problems are resolved at this stage itself. In respect of problems that remain, the worker concerned is advised to seek redressals through the Labour Courts under Saudi Labour Law, where the Mission deputes Arabic-knowing officials to represent the workers' claims. The response of the Saudi authorities in case of labour complaints is generally sympathetic to the workers, and in almost all cases, the disputes are resolved in favour of the workers.
2.	Abu Dhabi	In March 2005, Sharjah Immigration Jail authorities brought one case of an Indian woman to the notice of the CGI, Dubai. She had come on a babysitter visa but was subjected to torture to force her into prostitution.	The Consulate took up the matter with the local police authorities and the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, requesting them to investigate and take action against the people indulging in such activities. The woman was

1	2	3	4
			subsequently repatriated to India by the Consulate.
3.	Doha	One case of torture/beating of a workerby a local firm (M/s. Voltage Engineering Ltd., Doha) has been reported to the Mission and the matter was referred to the local police by the parties involved in the dispute. However in the absence of any credible evidence or a categorical medical report about the injuries sustained by the workers, the case was dismissed by the Police.	Due to the active intervention of the Mission, the matter was finally settled by the company by providing him one-way air ticket and settling his salary dues.
4.	Singapore	No such instances have come to the notice of the Mission. However, it may be pointed out that Singapore judicial system emcompasses death penalty for convicts charged under drug trafficking or firearms offences. These offences carry a mandatory death penalty. Judicial corporal punishment by caning is also in vogue for males in Singapore for serious crimes and also for non-violent offences like illegal entry and vandalism. In some cases, it is a mandatory punishment subject to medical condition of the convict. These punishments have been meted out to convicts irrespective of their nationality.	There has not been any discrimination against Indians in Singapore while subjecting to such punishments. However, individual cases of Indian nationals which came to the notice of the Mission, active interventions have been undertaken in the past to obtain reduction of such sentences to the extent possible. Caning has been exempted in genuine cases of medical condition of the convicts. The Mission keeps in contact with Indian nationals under trial or in prison. Consular access is permitted upon request. Mission normally makes these visits every week.
5.	Kuala Lumpur	The Mission has no knowledge of any case where the Indian workers in Malaysia are tortured brutally. Under the provision of Amended Immigration Act of Malaysia, illegal entry into the country carries a fine and jail term and mandatory whipping. The Mission has not come across any Indian detainee complaining about whipping though it is prescribed by law.	Cases of harassment of Indian workers by their employers (*e.g.* non-compliance of the terms and conditions of the contract) are reported to the Mission from time to time. Such cases are taken up with the employers/Labour Department and amicably sorted out. The Mission facilitate repatriation of Indian workers who wish to return to India as a result of harassment by the employers.
6.	Kuwait	No such case has been reported to the	In all cases of gross mistreatment

1	2	3	4
		Embassy during the last one year.	and physical abuse, the Embassy takes up the individual cases with the Kuwaiti Government (through the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior) and seeks thorough investigation. In cases where investigations reveal abuse, legal proceedings are initiated by the local Government under their laws. The Mission invariably help the victims in obtaining justice, in cooperation with the host Government.
7.	Amman	No case of torture, beheading and whipping of Indian workers has come to the notice of the Mission.	—
8.	Bahrain	No case of torture, beheading whipping mercilessly of an Indian worker has been reported to the Embassy during the last one year.	—
9.	Muscat	No case of torture, beheading and whipping of Indian workers in Oman has come to the notice of the Mission.	—
10.	Sana'a	No such case has come to the notice of the Mission.	—

Proposal on Terrorism in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

2569. SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what proposals were mooted by India at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit meet held in Astana, Kazakhstan in July this year for common security of the rgion and for dealing with cross border terrorism;

(b) what consensus was reached in regard thereto; and

(c) the steps taken and are being taken by Government in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) India was admitted as Observer to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at the Summit held in Astana, Kazakhstan from 4—6 July 2005. No proposal were mooted by India.

(b) The Summit declaration, which reflects the consensus reached by SCO member states, proposed *inter-alia*, close coordination among